

VZCZCXRO4178
OO RUEHDA
DE RUEHAK #2388/01 2641152
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
O 211152Z SEP 07
FM AMEMBASSY ANKARA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3807
RUEKJCS/CJCS WASHDC IMMEDIATE
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC IMMEDIATE
RUEKJCS/OSD WASHDC//PA
RUEUITH/ODC ANKARA TU
INFO RUEHTH/AMEMBASSY ATHENS 8379
RUEHIT/AMCONSUL ISTANBUL 3326
RUEHDA/AMCONSUL ADANA 2316
RUEHBS/AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS 6153
RUEHBS/USEU BRUSSELS
RUEHNO/USMISSION USNATO 5958
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 2554
RUEUITH/DET 1 39LG ANKARA TU
RHMFIUU/USDOCO 6ATAF IZMIR TU
RHMFIUU/39OS INCIRLIK AB TU
RHMFIUU/AFOSI DET 523 IZMIR TU
RHMFIUU/39ABG INCIRLIK AB TU
RHMFIUU/AFOSI DET 522 INCIRLIK AB TU
RUEUITH/AFLO ANKARA TU

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 03 ANKARA 002388

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR INR/R/MR, EUR/SE, EUR/PD, NEA/PD, DRL
JCS PASS J-5/CDR S. WRIGHT

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [OPRC](#) [KMDR](#) [TU](#)

SUBJECT: ANKARA MEDIA REACTION REPORT
FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 21, 2007

In Today's Papers

Erdogan Turns Down US Suggestion to Cut Energy Ties with Iran
All papers report Under Secretary of State Nicholas Burns called on Turkey and other countries during a visit to Ankara on Wednesday to "sacrifice" their business ties with Iran to help prevent Tehran from advancing its nuclear program. Burns also said the US was working for a peaceful solution with Iran. Leftist-nationalist Cumhuriyet says the US promised to extend support to Turkey in energy matters in Iraq and Central Asia if Turkey agrees to scrap its natural gas deal with Iran. Ankara has met the offer with reservations and asked the US to put the offer in writing.

Turkey cannot end its natural gas cooperation with Iran, Prime Minister Erdogan said on Thursday. "Turkey is generating 52 percent of its electricity from natural gas and it is out of the question for us to cut our ties with these countries," Erdogan told a news conference. "No country can make such a demand of us. And the US did not make such a demand."

When reminded that Burns "warned" Turkey against a cross border incursion into northern Iraq and urged Turkey to tackle the terror issue through "political dialogue with Iraqi leaders," Erdogan said "There's no such thing as 'Iraqi leaders.' Iraq has a central government with a president and prime minister. We do not accept any other leader or authority. We held talks with both President Talabani and Prime Minister al-Maliki, who told us they share the same views with us regarding terrorism." Erdogan noted the Iraqi interior minister would be visiting Turkey next week regarding the trilateral mechanism against terror.

Papers also report that following the statements of Erdogan, State Department Spokesman Tom Casey said, "One of the things we're looking to is our partners around the world, including Turkey, to help convince Iran to comply with the UN Security Council requirements, including that they suspend their nuclear activities. We certainly think it would be helpful to have the support of all countries in that effort and Turkey's no exception to that," Casey

was quoted as saying.

Erdogan Briefs Press on His Upcoming Contacts in US

All papers report on Thursday, Prime Minister Erdogan told a news conference at Ankara's Esenboga Airport before flying to the US for the annual gathering of the UN General Assembly (UNGA) that he would address UNGA September 28 and hold a series of bilateral talks with his counterparts from 25 countries. "I will participate in a meeting at the Council on Foreign Relations and a panel discussion to be held under the Clinton Global Initiative on 'Building a Multi-ethnic Global Society.' I will meet executives of the leading US companies over a dinner to be hosted by Coca-Cola. Our talks with business circles will continue at the New York Stock Exchange. I will also meet representatives of Turkish associations and Turkish citizens in New York," Erdogan said. In his contacts in the US, Erdogan will be accompanied by Deputy Prime Minister Nazim Ekren, Foreign Minister Ali Babacan and State Minister Mehmet Simsek as well as AKP deputy chairwoman Edibe Sozen. Erdogan is expected to return to Turkey on September 29.

Mainstream Vatan says Erdogan will lobby other leaders on behalf of Turkey's bid to become a temporary member of the UN Security Council when he attends the UNGA. He is due to meet 10 presidents, 30 prime ministers and 50 foreign ministers in New York. A commentary in Radikal says Erdogan's office and Turkish Foreign Ministry (MFA) have pressed hard to see a meeting between Bush and Erdogan in Washington, but it did not happen due to the tight schedule of the President.

Editorial Commentary on Erdogan's Visit to the US

Murat Yetkin observes from Washington in the liberal-intellectual daily Radikal: "PM Minister started his US trip in Washington

ANKARA 00002388 002 OF 003

although he has no scheduled official meetings. It seems the Washington trip will be reduced to showing tenderness and affection to his new grandson. In fact PM Erdogan really wanted to have a meeting with President Bush. The Turkish side, both in the Prime Ministry and the Foreign Ministry, expressed willingness to arrange a meeting at the White House. They even offered an alternate: if a meeting in Washington is not possible, there should at least be a short meeting at the UN. Yet no meeting has been set. Nowadays, Turkish officials are trying to console themselves by saying there will eventually be an official trip to Washington sometime in the next months. American sources say this [not scheduling an appointment with Erdogan] is due to the heavy agenda of President Bush. In this respect one wonders how he could have made some exceptions for Talabani last year. The fact of the matter is that President Bush probably does not have anything new to say vis-à-vis Turkey's expectations on the PKK. Regarding the other expectation, the Armenian Resolution issue, President Bush probably thinks that it can be prevented even at the last minute through a White House letter. In any case, the US capital is examining the new political process in Ankara in the post-Sezer period. As everyone knows, former president Sezer was not an outgoing leader, thus the bilateral relations between US and Turkey were handled through PM Erdogan. The picture has changed with Gul's presidency as he comes with a deep knowledge of foreign and domestic policy issues. The US administration, especially at the decision-making level, wonders who Bush's counterpart will be -- PM Erdogan or President Gul? This is not about whether Bush will see Erdogan or not. They will have a bilateral meeting and most likely PM Erdogan will be the first official guest to the White House after the elections. The issue is somehow broader. Americans wonder who the boss of Turkish foreign policy is. My answer to this question is PM Erdogan. But Americans are still searching for the answer. And they really want to be sure of the right answer especially in light of the upcoming Iran issue."

Trial of DTP Deputy Aysel Tugluk to Continue

Sabah, Radikal, Milliyet and others: Istanbul 13th heavy penal court decided to continue the case against DTP Diyarbakir deputy Aysel Tugluk, although as a member of parliament she has immunity. Tugluk is charged with spreading PKK propaganda, in line with article 14 of the constitution.

Intensified Military Operation in the Southeast against the PKK
Hurriyet, Milliyet, Cumhuriyet, Sabah, Vatan and others: Papers
report that the Turkish military intensified the security operations
in the rural areas of Sirnak, Hakkari and Siirt. Mainstream
Milliyet reports that 40 terrorists were surrounded in Kato
Mountains and, according to reports heard on the terrorists'
wireless communication devices, it is believed that 10 terrorists
were killed during the clashes.

TV Highlights
NTV, 7.00 A.M.

Domestic News

- President Abdullah Gul yesterday called on the Chief of the Turkish General Staff General Yasar Buyukanit to return a courtesy call the General had made earlier this month.
- On Wednesday, the Turkish government accepted bids from 14 companies for the construction of a 76-km stretch of the Kars-Tbilisi-Baku railway which will connect Turkey to Georgia and Azerbaijan. The railway is due for completion in 2009.
- Turkey's Energy Ministry is to present to the cabinet a 15 percent power price hike for residences and a 7.5 percent for industry next week. Analysts say a price hike would have a gradual negative impact on inflation.

ANKARA 00002388 003 OF 003

International News

- Greek Foreign Minister Dora Bakoyannis said Turkey and Greece should use the new atmosphere after the elections in the two countries to handle bilateral problems.
- A UNDP survey shows 86 percent of the Greek Cypriots and 72 percent of the Turkish Cypriots have no contacts with people from the other side of the divided island.
- Kemal Kerkuki, deputy speaker of the regional Kurdish parliament in northern Iraq, said that according to the constitution only residents registered in Kirkuk before 1957 would be allowed to participate in the referendum on the future of Kirkuk.
- Israeli dozers killed a 17-year old Palestinian boy in Gaza, one day after Israel declared the Hamas-controlled territory an "enemy entity."

WILSON